

Breakers Hotel Cottage, (The Spray)  
South County Road, South of The Breakers Hotel  
Palm Beach  
Palm Beach County  
Florida

HABS No. FLA-223

HABS,  
FLA,  
50-PALM  
9A-

PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D. C. 20243

## A BREAKERS HOTEL COTTAGE (The Spray)

Location: South County Road, south of The Breakers Hotel,  
Palm Beach, Palm Beach County, Florida.

Present Owner: Flagler System, Incorporated, 45 Cocoanut Row, Palm Beach.

Present Occupant: Seasonal guests of The Breakers Hotel.

Present Use: Winter season rental.

Significance: This large Shingle style house is the first of nine such cottages created by the hotel for guests who found hotel rooms too small for an entire season, or who were waiting for their own homes to be built.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

## A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1902.
2. Architect: Not determined here.
3. Original and subsequent owners: Original ownership was by the Florida East Coast Hotel Company, owned by Flagler, and subsequently renamed by heirs the Flagler System, Inc., which is the present owner of the cottages, as it is of The Breakers Hotel.
4. Builder, contractor, supplier: Henry M. Flagler was the builder, but contractor and supplier are unknown.
5. Original plan and construction: All the hotel cottages were done in Shingle style, popular during the 1870s and 1880s, and built by Flagler in Florida for the same people for whom it was a favorite style in Newport and the northeast seacoast resorts. Many of these people later built their own shingle style cottages in the town.
6. Alterations and additions: Since 1902 a one-story addition on the southeast has been made. In the westernmost of the double parlors the fireplace has been removed and replaced by a floor-to-ceiling mirror.

B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Structure: (See The Breakers, HABS No. FLA-228). The Spray, the first of the nine hotel cottages was occupied by Mr. Henry Phipps.

## C. Bibliography:

Secondary and published sources:

Palm Beach Daily News, February 11, 1902, p.2.

Map of West Palm Beach, Lake Worth, and Palm Beach. Chicago: Rand  
McNally & Co., copyright 1907.

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Summer 1971

## PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

### A. General Statement:

1. Architectural Character: This large house is representative of a type of ocean-front accommodation offered to its guests by a famous resort hotel, and its Shingle style was characteristic of the early cottage buildings in Palm Beach before the more elaborate Spanish style introduced by Addison Mizner. The character of the cottages was also contemporary with the original Breakers Hotel, which was destroyed by fire, and predate the existing hotel.
2. Condition of fabric: Fair, despite the many coats of paint which have all but obliterated sharp moldings and interstices.

### B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: Not recorded. The house is two stories and an attic or two-and-a-half stories, supported upon brick piers. Its shape is irregular, with a gable roof intersected by a hipped roof bearing two dormers, and a rear wing with flat roof.
2. Foundations: Rectangular brick piers with lattice infill.
3. Wall construction, finish, and color: First-floor walls are of white clapboard terminating with an 18" wood belt course which incorporates the second-floor window sills. Second-floor walls, dormers, and gables are of unstained cedar shakes.
4. Structural system, framing: Wood frame.

5. Porches: The porch on the east front returns around the south side of the house. Paired square posts, separated by a single baluster and railing, define four bays across the east front. Wood steps from grade occur at the second bay from the north. Other bays are enclosed by a wood balustrade. A set of wood steps from the driveway on the north does not appear to be original. The porch continues for four bays along the south side of the house. The rear porch on the west wing is one bay deep and two bays wide, with wood steps on five risers at the southernmost bay.
6. Chimneys: The two brick chimneys on the north and south walls terminate in corbelled courses with terra cotta chimney pots. A second chimney at the western end of the south wall is similar, except that there are no chimney pots above what appears to be newer brick above the roof line. There is also a small plain brick chimney on the service wing to the west.
7. Openings:
  - a. Doorways and doors: The main entrance door on the east is 1-3/4" thick. It contains two vertical panels between 8" and 16" horizontal panels. There is a fixed glazed transom above. The central panel in the rear door on the southwest wing is filled with a modern glass jalousie. The door on the south porch is similar to the main entrance door, but is without a transom. All trim is flat except for a crown molding at the heads.
  - b. Windows and shutters: All windows are wood, double-hung. The side lights at the entry are 10" x 16", set four over four. There is also a window on this east wall hung one-over-one, with the lights measuring 43' x 33". On the north and south walls, in the first floor, most windows are hung six-over-six lights, the lights measuring 10" x 16". The window on the service stair has 10" x 8-1/2" lights hung four-over four. On the second floor, windows on the north and south walls are the same as on the first floor, and on the east wall they are 43' x 33" hung one-over-one. Dormer windows in the third floor are two-over-two lights, each light measuring 13" x 19". All window trim is plain flat except on the second floor where the sills are integral with the belt course.
8. Roof:
  - a. Shape and covering: The main roof and the dormers are gabled with asbestos shingle covering. There is a hipped roof on the one-story addition at the southwest corner.

- b. Cornice, eaves: A plain banded cornice projects approximately 12" under the eaves.
- c. Dormers: There is a single dormer on each side except the west side. Side walls of the dormers are natural unstained shingles. The straight and raking cornice of the pedimented gable is painted white.

C. Description of the Interior:

1. Floor plans:

- a. First floor: The wide central hallway is flanked on the south by double parlors in line, and on the north by a sitting room and dining room. West of the dining room are the pantry, the kitchen, and service areas along the rear service corridor which connects to the main hallway on the east and to the exterior on the west. A one-story projection which may be an addition is located on the southwest corner of the house. It contains the library and a bath.
- b. Second floor: Two bedrooms with connecting baths are disposed on each side of the central hallway. Three additional bedrooms and baths are located on the north wall of the west or service wing. Service stairs lead to the third floor.
- c. Attic or Third floor: There are two bedrooms on each side of the hallway. These rooms are over the main part of the house and not over the service wing.
- d. Stairways: The first flight of the main stairs is centered on the west wall of the main hallway. Behind it, in the service corridor, are the service stairs.

2. First-floor rooms:

- a. Stairway: The main stairway begins with a flight of eight risers to the landing which is split by two risers, thence returning eastward for nine risers. Newel posts terminate in a low pyramidal block over classical molding. There are two turned balusters per tread under the molded handrail. Service stairs contain winders without a landing.
- b. Flooring: All floors are wood except for asphalt tile used in the baths.
- c. Walls and ceilings: Painted plaster with simple baseboard and cornice molding. Exceptions are the service corridor and some of the earlier baths where beaded, tongue-and-groove vertical siding is used. Also, there are picture moldings in the four main bedrooms.

- d. Doorways and doors: Interior doors are wood paneled with operating transoms over the bedroom doors. Double doors sliding into wall pockets are located between the entry hall and the north and south parlors, between the double parlors and between the north parlor and the dining room.
- e. Special decorative features: Fireplaces in the north parlor and the dining room are identical. A tall mantelpiece is composed of a wood mantel edged with beaded molding, flanked by two tall free-standing Ionic columns on pedestals supporting a second shelf with beaded edge. Between the two shelves is placed a mirror framed with egg-and-dart molding. In the southeast living room, the fireplace is identical except for the proportions between the column and its pedestal. A floor-to-ceiling mirror has replaced the fireplace in the southwest parlor. Fireplaces in the bedrooms are identical. Paneled pilasters and carved brackets support the mantel edged with dentils. All door knobs are black porcelain.

3. Mechanical equipment:

- a. Heating: Central heating with iron floor registers is present, with fire alarm and buzzer systems throughout.
- b. Lighting: Suspended bronze electrical fixtures of three lamps occur throughout.
- c. Plumbing: Standard plumbing for baths exists throughout.

D. Site:

- 1. General setting: "The Spray" is the southernmost in a row of three cottages south of The Breakers Hotel. The property is bounded on the south and east by an asphalt road, and on the north and south by an asphalt driveway, and has a whitewashed wall on the south and a latticed service yard on the southwest. The east lawn faces the Atlantic Ocean. The house is screened from the golf course on the west by Australian pines which are trimmed and used as a hedge on the north.

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PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

The Florida project to survey the historic architecture of Palm Beach and to emphasize written historical and architectural data was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) in cooperation with the Historical Society of Palm Beach County and the Florida Board of Archives and History in the summer of 1971. Under the direction of James C. Massey, then Chief of HABS, the project was carried out in the Historic American Buildings Survey field office in the Flagler Museum, Whitehall Way, Palm Beach, with Professor Woodrow W. Wilkins, AIA (University of Miami) Project Supervisor; Richard C. Crisson, Architect (University of Florida); Richard High, Student Architect (Georgia Institute of Technology); and Bryan Paul Bowman, Student Historian (University of Florida). Under the general direction of John Poppeliers, HABS Chief from March 1972, additional documentation was prepared and archival photographs for the project were taken in April 1972 by Jack, E. Boucher, HABS photographer. Editing and final preparation of the documentation was carried out in 1980 in the HABS Washington office by Lucy Pope Wheeler of the HABS professional staff.

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